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ABSTRACT

This book challenges American communities to reclaim their responsibility for raising healthy, successful, and caring children and adolescents. The book also offers a critique of American culture along with practical strategies for uniting and mobilizing communities around a shared vision of healthy development. The book argues that three interlocking strategies are important to this end: (1) meeting basic human needs in order to enhance our national capacity to ensure economic security, food, shelter, good and useful work, and safety for all residents; (2) targeting, reducing and eliminating the risks that diminish the healthy development of children and adolescents; and (3) developing language, vision and community. Chapter 1 of the book presents the vision and the challenges. Chapters 2 through 4 define the concept of developmental assets which consist of 40 building blocks of human development, each of which enhances the health and well-being of children and adolescents. Chapters 5 through 7 explore a vision of what an asset-building culture and an asset-building community look like. Chapters 8 through 11 provide strategies and techniques for growing healthy, asset-promoting communities. Three appendices provide selected references for the 40 developmental assets, findings from the 1990-1995 assets sample, and the progression of developmental assets from birth to age 18. (Author/SD)

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